



JOHNSONIAN NEWS LETTER

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THE OXFORD HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

At last the Oxford History of English Literature, sometimes irreverently referred to as OHEL, has reached the eighteenth century. To be sure, the Restoration has been jumped over, but that we hope will soon be remedied. For the period 1700-1740 Bonamy Dobrée, one of the general editors of the whole project, has now provided a thick volume of 701 pages, handsomely printed in the best Clarendon tradition. Unfortunately there has not been time for any detailed review, but we ought at least to pass on our initial reactions.

What is at once apparent is the fact that Dobrée has tried some novel experiments in the arrangement of material, in the main very successfully. Major writers like Pope and Defoe are given two chapters each — one for the early works and another for the later — and Swift's work is discussed in at least three sections. At times lesser writers are given separate treatment, or they may appear in general discussions of specific genres. Types such as the mock-heroic and the pastoral come in a special section labelled "Forms." All this tends to break up the old stereotyped author divisions. There are, of course, the inevitable chapters on the drama, the philosophers, the critics and aestheticians, the letter writers, historians, etc. The overall plan thus appears to us admirable.

Furthermore, Dobrée writes in a most attractive style. Often shrewd and amusing, he is always clear and informative. One gets the effect of pleasant talk about literature with an informed and perceptive critic. The tone throughout is perfectly sustained.

With this kind of personal criticism, of course, it is inevitable that the author's own predilections sometimes control the judgments. Since Dobrée has never much liked Addison, the treatment of this author is a bit unfair. In the sections on Defoe, whom he admires, Dobrée is often at his best. His preference for the early poems of Pope brings him into open disagreement with much recent criticism of the later satires. Although at times his handling of minor figures may appear prejudiced, in general he does a brilliant job of summation. Using quotations and apt characterization he has produced some unforgettable vignettes.

But, to use Johnson's words, with all his excellencies Dobrée has likewise faults. To be sure, it may appear ungracious to stress them, since what appears to us the greatest defect of the book – the very uneven coverage in the bibliographies – cannot wholly be attributed to him. Nevertheless we must say something about his helpers' capricious selection of authorities. Obviously for such a work the coverage can not be complete. But for most twentieth-century students it would be more valuable to include the most recent scholarly authorities rather than out-of-date commentators or casual critics. We have space for only a few instances, but they are characteristic. In the section on John Gay it is disconcerting to find omitted entirely the most authoritative biography, that by W. H. Irving (1940); the only lengthy serious discussion of his work, Sven M. Armens' John Gay: Social Critic (1954); and the most illuminating analysis of the Beggar's Opera, that by Bertrand Bronson, which appeared in 1941. For Pope one may lament that in the section devoted to shorter critical studies no mention is made of the various articles by Maynard Mack and Bill Wimsatt, which many of us find the most useful of all. And Douglas Grant's life of Thomson (1951) may by many be thought to be more immediately useful than those by Morel (1895) and Macaulay (1908). There is no need to go further. Each reader will supply his own examples. And one last protest – the index is woefully inadequate, with no breakdown of topics in the major entries.

If all this sounds unfriendly, we are sorry. Dobrée has given us a stimulating and delightful personal commentary. For such a series, however, we had hoped for a more reliable reference work.

THE NEW BOSWELL VOLUME

Again we welcome the latest addition to the so-called trade edition of Boswell's journals – Boswell for the Defense, edited by Bill Wimsatt and Fred Pottle. It is a fascinating volume covering an interesting period – from Boswell's marriage in 1769 to the execution of one of his clients, the sheep-stealer, John Reid, in September 1774. The journal of the tour to the Hebrides is, of course, omitted, but there are some superb Johnsonian passages. It is always valuable to be able to compare the earlier records with the later versions printed in the Life. Lawyers will find added interest in this volume, with its detailed accounts of Boswell's fruitless efforts to save various clients. But we have insufficient space for any thorough review. There have been excellent ones by Bob Halsband and Dick Altick in the New York Sunday papers, and by James Sutherland in SR. Bill Wimsatt's Introduction is, as might have been expected, admirable. Some portions which were originally intended for the volume, and which had to be omitted at the last minute, may be found in his article, "James Boswell: the Man and the Journal" in Yale Review for Autumn 1959. Taken together, they

provide an important analysis of Boswell's work, from a scholar who has heretofore not been associated in most of our minds with the Boswell edition. An article which might also be mentioned here is James Gray, "Boswell's Brother Confessor: William Johnson Temple," Tennessee Studies in Literature for 1959.

OTHER RECENT BOOKS

In Alexander Pope: the Poetry of Allusion (Clarendon) Reuben A. Brower has given us an admirable study of one aspect of Pope's art. That the poet achieved some of his most subtle metaphoric effects through the use of classical background has long been known. What Brower does is to show in detail exactly how it all worked. His purpose is "to help the modern reader to feel the presence of Virgil, Horace, and Homer in something like the way in which Pope and his contemporaries felt it." And this he does with conspicuous success. Happily we now have someone steeped in the classical tradition, willing to approach Pope sympathetically, and also having the required critical skill to hold the attention of the modern reader. This is an important book for every student of the period.

Earl Miner suggests that we mention J.H.M. Salmon's French Religious Wars in English Political Thought (Clarendon), which, though not an exhaustive study, provides an excellent introduction to the subject. In particular it should be very useful for teachers of Dryden.

Although not strictly in our period, The Tinker Library, a superb bibliographical catalogue of the books and manuscripts belonging to Chauncey Brewster Tinker (Yale Univ. Press), must be mentioned here. Bob Metzdorf, the compiler, has produced a beautiful and very valuable volume, which all of us will consult constantly. With a complete index and full bibliographical descriptions it is full of information.

A NEW 18TH-CENTURY SOCIETY

On April 30th there will be held the second meeting of a newly-formed Johnson Society of the Great Lakes Region. The place is John Carroll University in Cleveland. If you live anywhere within striking distance of Cleveland we are certain that you will be welcome to attend the program - not that you will be unwelcome if you live far away. Robert Haig (Univ. of Illinois) is President of the new society, and Warren Fleischauer (John Carroll, Cleveland 18, Ohio) is the Corresponding Secretary.

The following papers will be read: John W. Crowther, Jr. (Duquesne), "Pope's Defense of Theology, Philosophy, and the Arts

in *The Dunciad*, Book IV"; Arthur Sherbo (Mich. State), "Autobiography in Johnson's Notes on Shakespeare"; Kenneth MacLean (Toronto), "Pope's Essay on Man: the Philosophical Style"; Charles Weis (Ohio Wesleyan), "Lord Hailes and The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides"; Irvin Ehrenpreis (Indiana), "The Rhetorical Structure of Pope's Epistle to a Lady"; Nicholas Joost (Southern Illinois), "Legitimism vs. Conservatism: Dryden, Swift, Pope and Johnson"; Charles R. Richeson (Kenyon), "The London Press and the First Decade of American Independence." Your editor is to address a luncheon meeting on the topic, "Recent Trends in Eighteenth-Century Scholarship."

A QUERY

From Paul Kirby in Italy comes information concerning a manuscript recently discovered by the curator of the Lucca provincial library, a diary of the second half of the eighteenth century written by a noble Luccese, who lived long in France and became a Dutch citizen. He left a detailed account of many people he had known, including Voltaire and Rousseau. The manuscript is now being edited by Professors Ezio Benedetto and Carlo Pellegrini. A few identifications for footnotes remain obscure, and the editors would welcome suggestions. One concerns a "Dr. Paw." author of Recherches Philosophiques sur Les Égyptiens et Les Chinois (1775-76); another is Chevalier "Rutledge," an Irish officer in the military service of France, and author of Le Bureau d'Esprit, a five act comedy or satire published in Liege in 1776 and in London 1777. And there are a number of names of persons mentioned in the diary, which have in no way been identified. These are "Latouche," "Gigues," "La Nove," and "Saurin." If you can supply any hints or information, your editor will forward them to those who are working on the diary.

SOME RECENT ARTICLES

For the early period: John M. Aden, "The 1720 Version of 'Rural Sports' and the Georgic Tradition," MLQ for Sept.; A. B. Chambers, "Absalom and Achitophel: Christ and Satan," MLN for Nov.; R. D. Chambers, "Addison at Work on the Spectator," MP for Feb.; Robert Haig, "'The Unspeakable Curll': Prolegomena," Studies in Bibliography for 1960; Elijah L. Jacobs, "The Amiable Lady Mary," SAQ for Summer; Nicholas Joost, "Dryden's Medal and the Baroque in Politics and the Arts," Modern Age for Spring; Bruce King, "Dryden's 'Zamra Dance'," Explicator for Dec.; William H. McBurney, "Otway's Tragic Muse Debauched: Sensuality in Venice Preserved," JEGP for July; Barbara M. H. Strang, "Dryden's Innovations in Critical Vocabulary," Durham Univ. Journ. for June; Calhoun Winton, "New Documents Concerning Richard Steele's Father," JEGP for April.

For Pope and Swift: J. M. Cameron, "Mr. Tillotson and Mr. Pope," Dublin Review for Summer; G. K. Hunter, "Pope's Imitations of

Fanshawe," N&Q for May; Mackie L. Jarrell, "Swiftiana in Finnegans Wake," ELH for June; Daniel L. McCue, Jr., "A Newly Discovered Broadsheet of Swift's Last Speech and Dying Words of Ebenezer Elliston," Harvard Library Bull. for Autumn; Philip Pinkus, "Swift and the Ancients-Moderns Controversy," Univ. of Toronto Quart. for Oct.; Katherine M. Rogers, "'My Female Friends': The Misogyny of Jonathan Swift," Texas Studies for 1959; Henry W. Sams, "Swift's Satire of the Second Person," ELH for March; George Sherburn, "Pope on the Threshold of His Career," Harvard Library Bull. for Winter; Ernest Tuveson, "An Essay on Man and 'The Way of Ideas'," ELH for Sept.

For the later period: Miriam Benkovitz, "Dr. Burney's Memoirs," RES for Aug.; John Brooke, "Burke in the 1760's," SAQ for Autumn; Kalman A. Burnim, "Garrick as Director of Shakespeare's Plays," Shakespeare Newsletter for April; A. E. Dyson, "The Little Black Boy: Blake's Song of Innocence," Critical Quart. for Spring; G. Blakemore Evans, "The Missing Third Edition of Wheble's Junius (1771)," Studies in Bibliography for 1960; K.J. Fielding, "The Deserted Village and Sir Robert Walpole," English for Spring; Arthur Friedman, "The Problem of Indifferent Readings in the Eighteenth Century, with a Solution from Goldsmith," and "Two Notes on Goldsmith," Studies in Bibliography for 1960; Morris Golden, "The Broken Dream of The Deserted Village," Lit. & Psych. for Summer-Fall; and "Image Frequency and the Split in The Vicar of Wakefield," Bull. of the NYPL for Sept.; Paul Goodman, "A Statue of Goldsmith," Evergreen Rev. for Spring; Geoffrey Keynes, "Blake's Library," TLS for Nov. 6; A.M. Kinghorn, "The Literary and Historical Origins of the Burns Myth," Dalhousie Rev. for Spring; Henri Lemaitre, "Blake Re-visited," Études Anglaises for Jan.-March; Albert Mackie, "Burns and Fergusson," Saltire Rev. for Spring; Allan H. MacLeane, "Burns' Use of Parody in Tam O'Shanter," Criticism for Fall; William Montgomerie, "Robert Burns, Folk-Song Editor," Saltire Rev. for Spring; Shirley Robin, "Edmund Burke's Formative Years," New Leader for May 4; Charles Ryskamp, "Lawrence's Portrait of Cowper," Princeton Univ. Library Chron. for Spring; J. M. Stedmond, "Genre and Tristram Shandy," PQ for Jan.; and "Style and 'Tristram Shandy'," MLQ for Sept.; Morgan S. Stewart, "The Damning of Holcroft's Knave or Not? and O'Keefe's She's Eloped," HLQ for Nov. 1958.

For Fielding: Sheridan Baker, "Henry Fielding and the Cliché," Criticism for Fall; F. V. Bernard, "Shamela and Amelia: an Unnoticed Parallel," N&Q for Feb.; John J. Carroll, "Henry Fielding and the 'Trunk-Maker'," N&Q for June; William B. Coley, "The Background of Fielding's Laughter," ELH for June; and "Gide and Fielding," Comp. Lit. for Winter; S. J. Sackett, "Fielding and Pope," N&Q for June; Robert A. Smith, "The 'Great Man' Motif in Jonathan Wild and The Beggar's Opera," CLA Journ. for March; Maurice Johnson, "The Device of Sophia's Muff in Tom Jones," MLN for December.

Of general interest: Clifton Cherpach, "Is There Any Eighteenth-Century French Literature?" The French Rev. for Oct.; H. M. Estall, "Hume's 'Ruling Passion'," Queen's Quart. for Spring; Harlan W. Hamilton, "William Combe and John Hunter's Essay on the Teeth," Journ. of the Hist. of Medicine and Allied Sciences for 1959; Claude E. Jones, "Dramatic Criticism in the Critical Review, 1756-1785 (Part I)," MLQ for March; Mary Purcell, "The Art of Biography," Studies for Autumn; Viscount Soulbury, "Women of Influence, 1750-1800," Quart. Rev. for Oct. (mentions many of the bluestockings); the Univ. of Toronto Quart. for October contains a useful review of C. R. Linsalata's Smollett's Hoax: Don Quixote in English (Stanford U. P., 1957).

The November number of College English contains an article which will be especially valuable for all teachers of eighteenth-century literature: "Eighteenth-Century British Fiction in Print: An Uncritical Census," by Arthur Sherbo.

JOHNSON NOTES

We are very happy to pass on an important announcement from Magdi Wahba (27 Hod el Laban, Garden City, Cairo, Egypt), the editor of the volume of anniversary essays on Rasselas. A few copies of this collection, by the way, are still available, if you will write in and send your name and address. Wahba now writes that he hopes to be able to bring out a volume of Johnsonian studies every two years, the next one scheduled to appear in September 1961. He hopes soon to solicit contributions from Johnson scholars all over the world. If you have essays or notes for this volume, or wish to find out more concerning the plans, write direct to him at the address given above. For the 1961 volume your editor and Donald Greene hope to provide a supplement to Johnsonian Studies (1951) - a complete check-list of books and articles for the period 1950-1960. Off-prints of this continuation will be available at that time for those who wish to keep it with the earlier publication. If any of you have noted omissions in the earlier lists, or have come across Johnsonian references in out-of-the-way places which we might miss, please send them to us before next summer.

We have continued to receive reports from England and this country concerning the 250th anniversary Johnson celebrations. Particularly are we grateful to E. A. Knight of the Birmingham and Midland Institute for a huge package of programs, invitations, newspaper clippings, all having to do with their September programs. We wish we could share them with you. From V. H. Woods we learn that the work on the very valuable catalogue of the Johnson exhibition in the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, described as

"thrilling" by one of our correspondents, was largely done by Peter Platt of the Reference Library and John Woodward of the Art Gallery (we like to give credit when we can). Also received is a catalogue (limited to a hundred copies) of another exhibition, "Johnson's Books," arranged by F. E. Parish at the Birmingham Library in Margaret Street, a private subscription library founded in the eighteenth century by Joseph Priestley and other citizens. We suspect that this last will become a rare collectors' item. As usual in December, the English Johnsonians were active: on the 12th L. F. Powell addressed the London Society, and also laid the wreath on the grave of Johnson in Westminster Abbey; on the 14th he gave an account of his American travels to the Johnson Club. E. S. de Beer, we hear, has succeeded R. W. Ketton-Cremer as President of the Club.

During the autumn Fritz Liebert arranged an exhibition at the Grolier Club in New York City of material relating to members of Johnson's Club. After long search he was able to show something - a book or manuscript - connected with every member of the Club before Johnson's death. It was a fascinating collection. At two meetings of the Grolier Club there were addresses by Liebert and by Lewis P. Curtis, who spoke on "The Intellectual Aristocracy of the Eighteenth Century." We are indebted, too, to Maurice Saeta for further information concerning his talks on Johnson in Los Angeles. We hope he will be able someday to found a Johnson Society of California - one of his cherished desires.

J. E. Congleton has sent us a "rubbing" of Tetty's epitaph in Bromley in Kent, together with some comments on its present condition. The church was destroyed during the war by a direct hit, but the stone containing the epitaph was saved, and in the rebuilt edifice it is set in a kind of side entrance hallway. Though badly worn in places, it is still largely decipherable. As to other news from England, we might list the dates and topics for the meetings of the Johnson Society (always 3 P.M. in the Kenilworth Hotel, Great Russell St.): D.M. Low, "Gibbon and the Johnsonian Circle," 16 January; F. L. Lucas, "Johnson's Bête Grise - Thomas Gray," 13 February; F. N. Doubleday, "The Prayers and Meditations of Dr. Johnson," 12 March; J. H. Leicester, "Dr. Johnson and William Shenstone," 9 April.

Unfortunately we were unable to attend a series of lectures at Yale, two in French and two in English, celebrating the bicentenary of Rasselas and Candide, and the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of Johnson's birth. As part of the program which occurred early in December, Ted Hilles discussed Rasselas, and Bill Wimsatt, "Johnson on Shakespeare."

There is a remarkably complete discussion of recent Johnsonian scholarship by Bernhard Fabian in Die Neueren Sprachen for September

and October 1959. Other articles which should be listed are: F. N. Doubleday, "Some Medical Associations of Samuel Johnson," Guy's Hospital Reports, Vol. CI, No. I (1952), which we missed when it first appeared; William Kenney, "Rasselas and the Theme of Diversification," PQ for January; J. W. Johnson, "Rasselas and His Ancestors," N&Q for May; Roger G. Matthews, "Homage to Samuel Johnson," The Rising Generation (Tokyo) for October 1, 1959; William Henry Chamberlin, "Immortal Sam," National Review for December 5; Donald J. Greene, "The False Alarm and Taxation No Tyranny: Some Further Observations," Studies in Bibliography for 1960; Lawrence C. McHenry, Jr., "Dr. Samuel Johnson's Medical Biographies," Journal of the History of Medicine and Applied Sciences for 1959 (XIV, No. 3), "Robert Anderson, M.D. and His Life of Samuel Johnson," New England Journal of Medicine for Sept. 17, 1959.

EDMUND CURLL

Ed. Ruhe sends in information concerning a Curll collection now owned by the University of Kansas Library at Lawrence. "It was assembled privately by the late Peter Murray Hill, and purchased from him in 1954. The analysis of this unique holding has not yet been completed, but it includes among its approximately 550 books and pamphlets no less than 113 of Curll's publications not listed in the handlist of Ralph Straus (The Unspeakable Curll). Virtually all of Straus's titles are represented, and in addition, the collection includes Curll's own copy of Gerard Langbaine's Account of the English Dramatick Poets, and a small group of later eighteenth-century Curlliana items.

"The Kansas Library has been developing its eighteenth-century holdings at a rapid rate. This interest is reflected by two recent publications in the Library Series: Peter Murray Hill, Two Augustan Booksellers: John Dunton and Edmund Curll (No. 3, 1958), and William B. Todd, New Adventures Among Old Books (No. 4, 1958)."

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS ITEMS

We are delighted to see the announcement that the Southern Illinois University Press is to publish, in ten or twelve volumes, The London Stage, 1660-1800: a Calendar of Plays, Entertainments and Afterpieces, together with Casts, Box Receipts, and Contemporary Comment Compiled from the Playbills, Newspapers and Theatrical Diaries of the Period. The editors are W. B. Van Lennep, Emmett L. Avery, George Winchester Stone, Jr., Arthur H. Scouten, and C. Beecher Hogan. Avery's volume, for the period 1700-1729, will be ready in 1960, and it is hoped that the entire series will be published in five years' time.

Rae Blanchard is preparing a book on Steele, which will contain texts of all Steele letters which have appeared in manuscript or in print since 1941, when her edition was published. Also to be included are various of her printed articles, which give corrections and amplify annotations. We are certain that she would welcome any information concerning Steele's correspondence or his published work which she might not have. Her address is 3333 North Charles St., Baltimore 18, Md.

Bill Appleton (Columbia) has just completed a biography, full of new evidence, of the colorful eighteenth-century actor and playwright, Charles Macklin. Donald Bond hopes to see his edition of the Spectator (Clarendon) published by 1961, the 250th anniversary of the appearance of the first issues. Tom Copeland writes that Vol. II of Burke's Correspondence should be out soon, and that Vol. III is progressing. We might also welcome the appearance of a Burke News Letter, which appears as a regular department in the periodical Modern Age. Lois G. Morrison (San Antonio College) is working on a biography of Eustace Budgell, and we are certain would welcome any suggestions or help. The American Antiquarian Society (185 Salisbury St., Worcester, Mass.) is preparing a microcard reprinting of early American newspapers, 1704-1820. The first set of cards contains complete runs of the Massachusetts Spy, 1770-1772; The Boston Chronicle, 1767-1770; and the Censor, 1771-1772. An important examination of James Kinsley's edition of Dryden by David M. Vieth may be found in Modern Philology for May 1959.

In our last issue we gave the program for the Group VII meeting in Chicago, but failed to include that for Group VIII, which Bertrand Bronson had arranged. Included were Sheldon Sacks, "From Artistic Judgment to Ethical Standards: a Study of Values in Fielding's Novels"; Patricia Meyer Spacks, "Horror and Personification: an Exploration of Relationships"; F. W. Hilles, "Johnson the Biographer." Taken together, the two programs proved stimulating and very valuable, with the added treat of a detailed discussion by Ronald Crane of Ehrenpreis's paper on the fourth voyage of Gulliver. Other papers at the M.L.A. meeting which might be listed were: David M. Vieth, "Order of Contents as Evidence of Authorship: Rochester's Poems of 1680"; Hugh M. Davidson, "The Idea of Literary History in Boileau's Art Poétique" and a symposium led by George R. Havens and William F. Bottiglia, "Candide after Two Hundred Years."

AUGUSTAN REPRINT SOCIETY

Publications for the fourteenth year of ARS will include six items, most of them from the following list: Two Burlesques of Chesterfield (1774-1776), selected, with introd. by Sidney Gulick;

Richard Savage, An Author to be Let (1732), introd. by James Sutherland; William Herbert, Third Earl of Pembroke, Poems (1660), introd. by Gaby Onderwyzer; Francis Hutcheson, Reflections on Laughter (1729), introd. by Scott Elledge; Eighteenth-Century Newspaper Essays on the Theatre, selected, with introd. by John Loftis; [Peter Whalley], An Essay on the Manner of Writing History (1746), introd. by Keith Stewart; Sawney and Colley (1742) and other Pope pamphlets, ed., with introd. by W. Powell Jones; Henry Fuseli, Remarks on the Writings and Conduct of J. J. Rousseau (1767), introd. by Karl S. Guthke; [Charles Croke], Fortune's Uncertainty (1667), introd. by William Matthews. As in the past, all inquiries concerning these publications should be sent to The Augustan Reprint Society, William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, 2205 West Adams Blvd, Los Angeles 18, Calif.

JOHNSON AND MURPHY

We are indebted to Arthur Sherbo (Mich. S. U.) for the following interesting footnote to the relationship of Johnson and Arthur Murphy: "Arthur Murphy's unknowing plagiarism of one of Johnson's Ramblers in a French translation brought the two men together. I don't believe it has been remarked that Murphy had earlier plagiarized from an anonymous work by Johnson. Murphy's Gray's-Inn Journal, No. 8, is on Macbeth; in the essay Murphy helps himself generously, often verbatim, to portions of paragraphs one, two, and six, as well as note sixteen, of the Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth. The essay appears only in the 1754 edition of the Gray's-Inn Journal; possibly Murphy dropped it from the 1756 and 1786 editions in deference to his new friend."

HEADS ACROSS THE SEA

Although we have not yet seen a copy, we understand that Frances Sharf Fink's catalogue of 18th-century English portraits now in the United States is about to be published by the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia. From the advance publicity it is evident that the book will be of great value to all of us. Included is an extensive listing of several hundred oil paintings, drawings, engravings, mezzotints, and miniatures, in museums, libraries, and private collections in this country. There are forty-six illustrations, and the compiler has annotated the list with quotations from various contemporary literary works. The list should be particularly useful for those seeking unusual illustrations for new biographies or editions. Often in the past the same old portraits have been used, with the result that they have become hackneyed. We look forward eagerly to seeing the new volume.

NEW SWIFT TEXTS

With so many paperbacks already on the market, it may seem superfluous to draw particular attention to others. But as all of us know, the various editions each have their virtues and drawbacks. One may provide a complete introduction but meager notes, while another with full critical apparatus may omit a favorite poem or essay. For those of us who teach Swift, Louis A. Landa's latest edition of Gulliver's Travels (Houghton Mifflin Riverside Ed.) will provide a quick answer to the persistent question "What text shall I use?" Landa has included a twenty-page Introduction, packed with information, in which he judiciously discusses all the major biographical and critical problems the student needs for an intelligent reading. Invaluable, also, are a two-page Chronology and seventeen pages of Notes, in which topical references, proper names, eighteenth-century terminology, and obscure allusions are fully explained.

By the time this number of JNL reaches you there will also be a collection of Swift, again edited by Landa for Houghton Mifflin, and including, in addition to Gulliver, A Tale of a Tub, The Battle of the Books, The Bickerstaff Papers, Tatler No. 230, Examiner Nos. 14 and 16, An Argument against Abolishing Christianity, The Drapier's First Letter, Intelligencer No. 9, A Modest Proposal, eight poems, three letters from the Journal to Stella, and five letters, to Gay, Pope, Martha Blount, Miss Hoadly, and Mrs. Pendarves. The enlarged edition will include more copious notes and a two-page bibliography. Needless to add, in both editions Landa has relied throughout upon the most authoritative texts. Congratulations to all concerned for providing us with a cheap, reliable edition of Swift for both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

MORE NEWS ITEMS

An important event for all Johnsonians will be the publication by the Yale University Press in March of Donald J. Greene's detailed analysis of Johnson's political ideas. This will, we predict, be a milestone in the new appreciation of Johnson's moral position.

We are delighted to see that this spring there will be made available in paper-back editions a number of important books in our field. Among them are: Mark Van Doren, John Dryden: a Study of His Poetry (Indiana, Midland Books); Arthur O. Lovejoy, The Great Chain of Being (Harper), and Essays in the History of Ideas (Putnams); Marjorie Hope Nicolson, Voyages to the Moon (Macmillan); Richard Altick, The Scholar Adventurers (Macmillan); Arnold Kettle, An Introduction to the English Novel: Vol. I, Defoe to George Eliot (Harper); another abridgment of Boswell's Life of Johnson (Dell).

Harper is publishing the abridged Pepys Diary, ed. O.F. Morshead, with the Shepard illustrations. We understand that Arthur Case's Four Essays on Gulliver's Travels has recently been reprinted by Peter Smith of Gloucester, Mass.

For any of our readers who are interested in music we recommend a new book by John Wilson, Roger North on Music, just published by Novello in London. Profusely illustrated, it is a mine of information on 17th and early 18th-century musical interests, both practical and theoretical.

Culled from a newspaper some years ago — under the title of "Libel" — "Scrawled legend on a wall downstairs at the Brattle Theatre, Cambridge, Mass., where after seeing art movies upstairs, an audience can meet to discuss life and literature: 'Ralph is a neo-Classicist.'"

A bit of news which we should have passed on long ago concerns the gift by Thurston P. Blodgett, prominent business man and bibliophile, of an extensive Johnsonian collection to Kent School in Kent, Conn. In Blodgett's collection there were almost two hundred first editions and rare copies of books having to do with the Johnson circle, some being interesting association copies. Included also are the best modern reference works devoted to this period. It is unusual for a preparatory school to have such a valuable collection in its library, and we congratulate both the school and Thurston Blodgett on this happy conclusion of a lifetime of acquisition of books.

In our last number, as you know, we reluctantly announced a slight increase in the annual subscription price. The response has been very heart-warming. Indeed, the friendly loyalty of JNL subscribers, we think, is something very special. You may be sure that your editors will do everything possible to keep that feeling alive, and to justify your generous support. Although space does not permit listing all those who have written in to offer help, we hope you will understand how grateful we are.

We are pleased to receive Louis B. Wright's pamphlet, The Folger Library: a Decade of Growth, 1950-1960, in which he describes the fabulous advances made in the past decade by his library, as it becomes one of the major research institutions in the world dealing with the English Renaissance and Augustan periods. We send hearty congratulations to him and to all concerned. His enlightened view of the responsibilities of such a library should stand as a model for all to emulate.